

NONPROVISIONAL APPLICATION FOR LETTERS PATENT

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

5 Be it known that I, **GEORGE IRVIN**, residing at 358 Valley Hill Road, Griffin, Georgia, a citizen of the United States of America, have invented certain new and useful improvements in a

10 **PERSONAL BLIND HEAT CONTAINMENT APPARATUS
AND METHOD THEREFOR**

of which the following is a specification:

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**PERSONAL BLIND HEAT CONTAINMENT APPARATUS
AND METHOD THEREFOR**

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TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention relates generally to an apparatus and method for providing a personal environment to outdoorsmen, and more particularly to an apparatus and method 10 for providing a warm enclosure for hunters while they await game.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

15 Although various devices and methods to provide a warm environment are known, all are disadvantageous when compared to the present invention.

For instance, some devices require a connection to an 20 alternating or direct current supply, and are thus unsuitable for use in remote environments. Still other devices lack a supply of heat and are unsuitable for cold weather environments.

Also known are devices that utilize as body warmers having a seat, having a heat source and wherein an envelope surrounds the user's body. Although such devices may be designed for outdoor spectators and/or hunters, such devices
5 are disadvantageous as they typically require a heat shield to protect the user from the heat source and hoop rings to keep the bottom of the device open, thus to prevent contact with the heat source. Additionally, most such devices do not cover the user's head, but usually terminate at the user's shoulders
10 and, thus, leave the head and upper torso unprotected. Moreover, such devices generally require that the chair be externally located, if utilized, thereby inadequately facilitating ease of use. Such known devices further lack a means for securing to the ground to complete the confinement
15 of heated air, and also lack a means for securing of the user via a cable and harness to a point above.

Also desired is a system for securing a person to a structure, such as a tree or post. Known systems do not
20 provide for fastening a garment around the tree, a post or a chair, only the attachment of safety wires thereto, and are further disadvantageous wherein they lacks heater means.

While some or all of the above-referenced devices may be utilized for providing some form of heating to an outdoorsman, they lack facility to provide adequate warmth and the ability to cover the head and face, and are overly complicated.

5 Therefore, it is readily apparent that there is a need for a personal blind heat containment apparatus and method that overcomes the aforementioned disadvantages by providing weather protection via a warm enclosure covering the entire body and head.

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BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention arose from a need to provide a warm environment for outdoorsmen in remote areas, wherein the 15 device is readily portable and wherein the device permits a hunter to observe his prey while maintaining himself and his weapon at the ready in the warm environment.

Briefly described, in a preferred embodiment, the present 20 invention overcomes the above-mentioned disadvantages and meets the recognized need for such a device by providing a method and apparatus for maintaining an individual within a warm environment, yet still allows the individual to hunt or

perform other outdoor activities that require the individual to remain in a stationary position for an extended period of time. The device and method may also be utilized to provide warmth to individuals recuperating from exposure to cold
5 weather conditions and their effects.

According to its major aspects and broadly stated, the present invention in its preferred embodiment is an overgarment, preferably constructed from fleece, wherein the
10 overgarment preferably covers the head, but still provides an opening for the eyes. The overgarment preferably extends down to the ground, where it can be staked to provide an expansive area suitable for covering not only the lower torso and extremities of an individual; but also a chair and a non-
15 asphyxiating heating device.

More specifically, the present invention is a fleece covering having a zippered portion in the front thereof for permitting entry therethrough. The fleece is preferably
20 positioned over a chair, thereby allowing the user to maintain a comfortable position in which to await and observe game. A heating device is preferably positioned under, or adjacent to, the chair for providing heat to the user. The fleece covering

is further adapted to be secured to the ground, floor, and/or to a rear anchor, such as a tree post, via use of a second zipper portion in the rear of the fleece covering. Although the garment preferably covers the arms of the user, openings 5 in the front of the fleece covering permit insertion of hands therethrough to the inside environment. The device has sufficient space inside to permit a hunter to have his weapon at the ready within the garment, if desired, requiring only raising of the weapon upon sighting suitable game. The user 10 can readily exit the garment via the zippered front should he desire to operate his weapon from a position external of the garment.

A feature and advantage of the present invention is its 15 ability to be utilized as a tree blind or ground blind by a hunter.

A feature and advantage of the present invention is its ability to allow nearly full coverage of the head without 20 asphyxiating the wearer.

A further feature and advantage of the present invention is its suitability for cold weather environments, particularly severe cold weather environments.

5 A feature and advantage of the present invention is its portability.

A further feature and advantage of the present invention is its ease of manufacture and low cost of production.

10 A further feature and advantage of the present invention is that it can be utilized to provide medical treatment by raising and maintaining the body temperature of individuals who have suffered from overexposure to a cold environment.

15 A feature and advantage of the present invention is that it permits a hunter to have his weapon at the ready in a warm, secure environment.

20 These and other features and advantages of the present invention will become more apparent to one skilled in the art from the following description and claims when read in light of the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Having thus described the invention in general terms, the present invention will be better understood by reading the
5 Detailed Description of the Preferred and Selected Alternate Embodiments with reference to the accompanying drawing figures, which are not necessarily drawn to scale, and in which like reference numerals denote similar structures and refer to like elements throughout, and in which:

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FIG. 1 is a front perspective view of a personal blind heat containment apparatus according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

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FIG. 2 is a rear perspective view of a personal blind heat containment apparatus according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

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FIG. 3 is a perspective view of a personal blind heat containment apparatus of the present invention shown with user having weapon ready.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED AND ALTERNATIVEEMBODIMENTS

In describing the preferred and selected alternate
5 embodiments of the present invention, as illustrated in the Figures, specific terminology is employed for the sake of clarity. The invention, however, is not intended to be limited to the specific terminology so selected, and it is to be understood that each specific element includes all
10 technical equivalents that operate in a similar manner to accomplish similar functions.

Referring now to FIG. 1, apparatus 10 is preferably made of a fleece-type material and preferably has head portion 20
15 with eye opening 30 formed therethrough. Front torso portion 40 preferably has zipper 50 therein, wherein zipper 50 preferably extends from zipper top 52 and lies preferably proximate head portion 20 down the full length of front torso portion 40, and preferably to zipper bottom 54. Zipper bottom
20 54 preferably lies proximate to base perimeter 60, wherein base perimeter 60 is preferably secured to ground G by inserting stakes 70 preferably through securing grommets 80. Base perimeter 60 is preferably secured in a rectangular,

nearly square, fashion, thereby preferably providing a tent-like enclosure via base **90** of apparatus **10**.

Preferably located within base **90** of apparatus **10** is
5 chair **100** for permitting a user to be seated while apparatus
10 is in use. Alternatively, a user may stand while utilizing
apparatus **10**. Heater **110** is preferably located underneath
chair **100**. Heater **110** is preferably a non-asphyxiating
heater, such as, for exemplary purposes only, a BLACKCAT™
10 portable catalytic heater, as is available from the COLEMAN®
Company of Wichita, Kansas. The external surface of Heater
110 is further preferably of the type that maintains a
relatively low surface temperature, so as to prevent burn
injury upon momentarily touching/contacting same.

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Preferably, the warm environment of apparatus **10** forms a
shell around outdoorsmen, and particularly hunters, and is
utilized in shielding themselves from extremely cold ambient
temperatures.

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Apparatus **10** is further preferably utilized as a
hunting blind that allows a hunter to remain warm while

waiting for game to appear. Apparatus **10** further preferably permits easy accessibility and is readily transportable.

Referring now to **FIG. 2**, illustrated therein is apparatus **10** from a rear perspective. Rear portion **120** of apparatus **10** preferably has opening **130** preferably located below head portion **20** and proximate to top **142** of rear torso portion **140**. Opening **130** is preferably sized for passage therethrough of cable **C** suitable for utilization in tethering the wearer of apparatus **10** via harness **H**. When apparatus **10** is utilized in a tree blind or raised area, cable **C** preferably passes through reinforcing grommet **132** and secures above the user. Base perimeter **60** is secured by clips **72** through grommets **80**. Zipper **160** is preferably located below opening **130**, preferably extending from zipper top **162**, wherein zipper top **162** preferably lies proximate top **144** of base portion **120** to zipper bottom **164**, and wherein zipper bottom **164** preferably lies proximate to base perimeter **60**. Zipper **160** is preferably selectively utilized to allow apparatus **10** to be secured over an object, such as a post, a tree stump or a fixed chair.

Referring now to **FIG. 3**, apparatus **10** is shown in use by outdoorsman **O**. Outdoorsman **O** preferably installs apparatus **10**

over chair 100, securing apparatus 10 over and around chair 100 by use of zipper 160 (see FIG. 2). Once zipper 160 is closed, zipper 160 is covered by closing snaps 142, thereby securing flap 144 and providing a heat-tight environment 5 barrier at the rear of apparatus 10. Outdoorsman O then preferably enters apparatus 10, secures or closes zipper 50, and thereafter preferably closes snaps 56 to secure flap 58. Once fully enclosed with apparatus 10, Outdoorsman O may maintain weapon W in a ready condition, held either inside 10 apparatus 10 externally thereof. Outdoorsman O may further selectively stand or sit on chair 100. Heater 110 preferably provides warmth to the air contained within apparatus 10, thereby providing a contained and warmed environment for outdoorsman O.

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It is envisioned in an alternate embodiment that apparatus 10 may be made from a rain-proof material.

It is further contemplated in an alternate embodiment 20 that apparatus 10 may be made from any insulating material such as, for exemplary purposes only, GORE-TEX™, as is available from W.L. Gore & Associates, Inc. of Newark, Delaware.

It is contemplated in an additional embodiment that apparatus **10** may include a means for securing base **90** to the floor of a hunting or tree blind.

5 It is envisioned in an alternate embodiment that eye opening **30** may include an eye covering, such as, for exemplary purposes only, goggles, visors, mesh screen, or the like.

10 It is further envisioned in an alternate embodiment that a cooling environment may be created by the present invention, wherein a small cooling device could be incorporated, thereby cooling the inside of the fleece overgarment.

15 It is further contemplated in an alternate embodiment that apparatus **10** could be enlarged to accommodate more than one user.

20 In an alternative embodiment, it is envisioned that an exhaust of heater **110** may exit apparatus **10**, or alternately that heater **110** may be partially enclosed by apparatus **10**.

Having thus described exemplary embodiments of the present invention, it should be noted by those skilled in the

art that the within disclosures are exemplary only, and that various other alternatives, adaptations, and modifications may be made within the scope of the present invention. Many modifications and other embodiments of the invention will come 5 to mind to one skilled in the art to which this invention pertains having the benefit of the teachings presented in the foregoing descriptions and the associated drawings. Therefore, it is to be understood that the invention is not to be limited to the specific embodiments disclosed and that 10 modifications and other embodiments are intended to be included within the scope of the appended claims. Although specific terms are employed herein, they are used in a generic and descriptive sense only and not for purposes of limitation. Accordingly, the present invention is not limited to the 15 specific embodiments illustrated herein, but is limited only by the following claims.